

## Fort Augustus & Glenmoriston Community Company

### Memorial Hall, Canalside, Fort Augustus

#### Business Plan

February 2023



## Contents

Executive Summary.....	3
Background .....	4
Timeline of achievements.....	4
Community vision .....	5
Governance.....	6
Board.....	6
Staff.....	6
Partnerships.....	6
Memorial Hall, Fort Augustus .....	7
Description & location .....	7
Alternative venues and managed useage.....	7
Improvements.....	8
Finance.....	9
Capital cost of purchase and development .....	9
Revenue costs .....	9
SWOT .....	11

## Executive Summary

Fort Augustus & Glenmoriston Community Company (FAGCC) will purchase the Memorial Hall and develop it into two community spaces. A community meeting space offering a warm accessible and welcoming space and a community office offering a shared space to work in and engage with the community and other community organisations active in the area.

Funding for the purchase price of £40,000 will be sought from the Scottish Land Fund to which FAGCC has already made a successful Stage 1 application. FAGCC will fund 20% of this from Community Benefit funds held by them.

The Development costs and associated legal and professional fees of £55,701 will be funded through an application to the Community Benefit funds that FAGCC hold.

The meeting space will be hired to local groups looking for a smaller more intimate space than the Village Hall offers. The Memorial Hall is also more accessible to members of the community that struggle to access the Village Hall.

The community office space will be primarily occupied by FAGCC, Sunflower Home Care (SHC) and 3 Glens Community Care (3GCC). The bulk of the office rent will be paid by the main user FAGCC with SHC and 3GCC contributing a lesser amount. The community office will be located in the centre of the village making the three organisations more accessible to the community and increasing opportunities for engagement.

Running costs will largely be covered by an annual support grant that FAGCC Community benefit funds pay to all the community owned spaces in the area. Hire rates for the meeting room will be on a par with the village hall and will generate a modest income.

## Background

The Fort Augustus & Glenmoriston Community Company (FAGCC) was established by the Community Council in 2007 as the approved body to receive & distribute community benefit to the Fort Augustus & Glenmoriston area. FAGCC is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity. Ordinary Membership of the company is drawn from the Fort Augustus and Glenmoriston Community Council area. The majority of the board of directors are democratically elected by the membership from the membership up to a maximum of nine. The community council can appoint one of their members onto the FAGCC board. The board also have the option to co-opt up to three directors.

In addition to distributing community benefit funds to local groups, FAGCC aims to promote rural regeneration in areas of social and economic deprivation within the community. To that end FAGCC undertakes key projects which contribute to priority needs of the company as set down in the community action plan.

Community benefit income received annually is typically around £600K. Whilst FAGCC receives this income there are restrictions on how that money can be used, it is not unrestricted. Of this figure approx. £94k is allocated to the community caretakers scheme, £83k for the office including staffing, 43k for the apprenticeships and 100k for grants to local community organisations. £150k is set aside for the future reserves to establish a fund for use once community benefit monies are no longer received. FAGCC applies for match funding when carrying out developments and to date FAGCC has taken around £2.7million of match from varying sources.

### Timeline of achievements

FAGCC has made significant achievements since its inception, what follows is a brief timeline overview of those achievements

**2007** - FAGCC established to receive and distribute windfarm money

**2009** - FAGCC establishes the grant programme. FAGCC runs a successful multi strand grant programme offering grants to groups, individuals for community benefit and students/apprentices. FAGCC supports a wide diversity of projects, all of which benefit or further the development of the local community.

**2010** - FAGCC takes ownership of the Fort Augustus Village Hall, builds an extension and installs solar panels. FAGCC continue to support the hall through an annual grant as well as managing it on a day to day basis.

**2013** - FAGCC launches an apprenticeship scheme. The apprenticeship scheme is run jointly with Stratherrick and Foyers Community Trust and the Glengarry Trust. The scheme offers young people the opportunity to live, work and train in their local communities. To date the Community Company has supported 10 young people from the Fort Augustus and Glenmoriston area complete their apprenticeships.

**2014** - FAGCC establishes the Community Caretaking team. The Community Caretaker team undertakes grass cutting, litter and leaf clearance, gritting and care for the cemeteries in Fort Augustus.

**2016** - FAGCC Secures funding and takes ownership of the burnt-out medical centre and grounds with a view to building a new one.

**2017** - FAGCC secures funding and takes ownership of No. 2 Bunoich Crescent. Access to affordable housing is a major issue and this is FAGCCs first foray into community housing.

**2018** - FAGCC facilitates the completion of a Community Action Plan (CAP) for the area. The CAP identifies priorities for action including the provision of affordable housing.

**2018** - FAGCC Secures funding to purchase the 17 acres of the Old Convent Land. An investment for the future, the purchase gave the community control over the land and how it could be used.

**2019** - FAGCC completes the build of the new Cill Chuimein Medical Centre. The medical centre is leased to the NHS. Double the size of the old one, the aim is that it becomes a one stop shop for all things health related.

**2019** - FAGCC begins plans for building 12 new homes for affordable rent on a section of the convent land.

**2020** - FAGCC secures funding, awards the build contract and work begins on building 12 new homes on the Old Convent Land.

**2021** - FAGCC completes work on the 12 new homes at the newly named Caledonian Court and by Autumn of 2021 the homes are fully tenanted.

**2022** - FAGCC secures funding to purchase another property for affordable rent, No.1 Bunoich Crescent. The property is refurbished and tenanted in April 2022.

**2022** - FAGCC completes a review of the Community Action Plan to ascertain if priorities have changed post COVID. The community priorities remain the same.

## Community vision

Work on the Community Action Plan revealed the **community vision** for the Fort Augustus and Glenmoriston area.

### **Great community and recreational facilities and opportunities.**

- Local access to high quality indoor and outdoor recreational facilities.
- Places where the community can come together for socialising, activities and events.

### **Sustainable population – housing and services**

- Good mix of all ages with a growth in population to maintain local services
- Education, health and care services at the heart of the community
- More housing for the needs of the community and economy

### **Diverse economy and job opportunities**

- A wider range of businesses, training and job opportunities

### **An attractive place to visit and stay and enjoy the wider area and outdoors**

- A great tourist destination that has made the most of its natural and cultural heritage and its strategic location at the heart of the Great Glen.

### **A well connected community**

- Better transport, better roads, faster broadband and better mobile reception

### **A green community**

- More recycling
- Better access to renewable energy for households, businesses and community buildings
- Support for local food production

## Governance

### Board

FAGCC currently has ten Directors nine of whom are elected from the community, one appointed by the community council. FAGCC has the option to co-opt a further three directors onto the board for a one year term. At the time of writing this plan the current two co-opted directors have stood down after one year. FAGCC will co-opt at least two more directors at their next board meeting following the AGM in November. The board meets monthly at alternating venues between Dalchreichart, Invermoriston and Fort Augustus. Grant applications are discussed at the next available board meeting and management accounts are reported quarterly following the quarterly Finance & Resources sub group meeting.

### Staff

FAGCC employs two office staff.

The Chief Officer has over 20 years experience working in the third sector in the Highland & islands area. He has developed, funded and project managed capital projects with values from £10K to £1.6 million. He has worked for HIE and DTAS supporting community groups with land and building acquisition (CRTB and CAT), governance, funding and general advice.

A part time Office Manager with 30 years experience working in the charity sector managing facilities and finance processes.

FAGCC contracts with an experienced bookkeeping company ensuring that the accounts are up to date and accurately recorded. A combination of the Office manager and Bookkeeper ensures FAGCC has access to up to date financial information that enables the Chief Officer to closely monitor budgets and forecasts throughout the year reporting to the Finance and Resources sub committee on a quarterly basis.

FAGCC employs five Community Caretakers who take care of the areas environs and carry out small development projects.

### Partnerships

FAGCC works closely with other community groups operating in the Fort Augustus & Glenmoriston area in particular with asset owners, West Glenmoriston Community Hub and Glenmoriston Millennium Hall.

FAGCC supports Glenmoriston Improvement Group, 3Glens Community Care and is a partner in the 3 Glens Resilience Group that includes Glengarry, Glenmoriston and Fort Augustus. FAGCC continues to work with these partners.

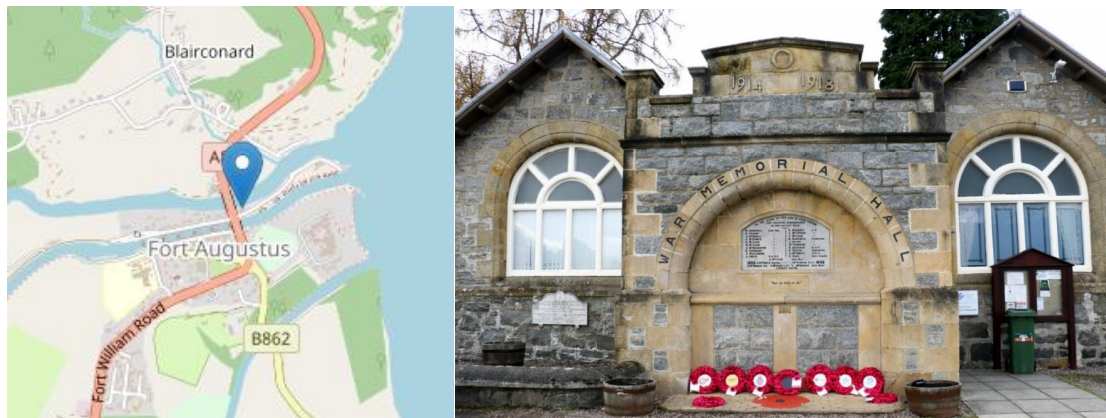
FAGCC has close links with the neighbouring community organisations of Stratherrick and Foyers Community Trust and the Glengarry Trust. We work together on the Apprentice programme and ensure that other work we do complements and adds value where appropriate.



## Memorial Hall, Fort Augustus

### Description & location

The Fort Augustus Memorial Hall is a Category C listed building, built in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century as a public hall it includes a memorial to the dead of the Second World War. It sits in a prime location on Canalside close to the Oich Swing Bridge. Externally there are limited grounds. Internally the hall has been partitioned to form a small hall, service point and registration room. It also has a toilet and kitchen.



Since the onset of COVID restrictions in 2020 there has been no regular presence at the council service point and from all accounts it does not appear that the service point will reopen. The property is usable in its current condition but would benefit from refurbishment.

### Alternative venues and managed useage

FAGCC operates from a small office, originally intended as a small meeting room, at the Village Hall. The Village Hall is up a steep brae and some people can't physically make their way up the hill. The Memorial Hall will provide a larger more accessible space for a 'community office' closer to the centre of the village. The increased space will allow FAGCC to offer colocation with Sunflower Home Care and 3 Glens Community Care sharing space and facilities.

The Village Hall is well used in the evenings and daytime use is building. What this means to FAGCC and other users is that often the Hall is not available for meetings as it is used predominantly for activities like yoga, taekwondo, bowling, cadets, keep fit, junior shinty, playgroup and youth club. The Village Hall is the main location for active groups as the school games hall has restrictions on use in terms of times and cost.

The Memorial Hall offers a more suitably sized space for small meetings and non-sporting activities. It is a smaller, cosier, easier to heat space. This is particularly relevant during the colder months when heating is required. The community council and camera club were already using it for their meetings.

The other option for meetings is the community room at the medical centre. However for security and health reasons this room is not as accessible and convenient as the meeting space at the Memorial Hall during the day and the evenings a key and alarm code is required for access.

FAGCC own the medial centre and lease it to NHS Highland. Freeing up the community room in the Medical Centre will create an opportunity for a dental practise to make use of the space. There is a dentist keen to set-up a practise in Fort Augustus. This is one of the services that the community has

asked that we try to attract to the area and to do that we need to offer premises. As owners of the Medical Centre we have influence over the use of the community room and other upstairs space.

In summary the Memorial Hall offers FAGCC the opportunity to release space elsewhere for other uses and at the same time increase the office and meeting room space for FAGCC and other groups. Ownership of the Memorial Hall will allow FAGCC to invest in its improvement and retain it for community use.

### Improvements

The Memorial Hall would benefit from refurbishment and remodelling of the interior.

The first stage will be to have an energy efficient assessment carried out by Business Energy Scotland to identify where we can improve energy efficiency and cut costs during refurbishment.

The meeting room will remain largely unchanged other than to redecorate and improve heating & lighting.

The kitchen will require complete refurbishment.

The toilet will require adaptation to be fully accessible.

The main changes will be in the service point and registration room. These areas have been fitted with a suspended ceiling cutting off the full height of the windows. The intention is to open these two rooms up to the roof and create a single open office space. The lighting and heating will be improved to create a comfortable welcoming space benefitting from natural light on three sides.

The whole internal area will require redecoration.

A rough estimate of these works is £48,840 inc VAT.



## Finance

### Capital cost of purchase and development

<b>COSTS</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Purchase price	£40,000
Development	£40,700
Professional fees inc legal	£4,884
Planning	£1,000
VAT	£9,117
	<b>£95,701</b>
<b>FINANCE</b>	
Scottish Land Fund purchase (80%)	£32,000
FAGCC purchase (20%)	£8,000
FAGCC development	£55,701
	<b>£95,701</b>

<b>DEVELOPMENT COST ESTIMATE</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Downtakings	£5,000
Kitchen	£7,000
Toilet	£5,000
Electrical work	£6,000
Heating	£6,000
Making good	£5,000
Decoration	£3,000
Sub Total	£37,000
Contingency @ 10%	£3,700
ex VAT	£40,700
VAT	£8,140
TOTAL	<b>£48,840</b>

### Revenue costs

Income is based on existing users of the Memorial Hall plus the current users of the village hall that would benefit from a smaller more accessible venue. This wouldn't necessarily affect the income to the Village Hall in the long term as it would free up slots that are likely to be filled by active groups.

FAGCC will pay rent as will 3 Glens Community Care and Sunflower Home Care for community office space. 3GCC and SHC apply to FAGCC Community Benefit Funds for an annual grant and the office rent will be included in the applications.

FAGCC awards an annual support grant to all of the community owned facilities in the area. The increased cost of energy and generally high costs for everyone means that if FAGCC didn't award the support grant, the venues would have to increase hire costs at a time when people simply cannot afford further increases to their cost of living. Although not yet approved by the FAGCC board the proposal is to increase the annual support grant to £15,000.

Expenditure figures reflect the expenditure that FAGCC incurs on the Village Hall.

<b>Hire Rates/hour ex VAT</b>			
Community	£6.25		
Service	£15.00		
Commercial	£25.00		
<b>INCOME</b>			
<b>Meeting room</b>	<b>meet/year</b>	<b>hour/meet</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Camera Club	12	2	£150
Community Council	12	3	£225
3 Glens Community Care	6	2	£75
FAGCC	12	3	£225
Sunflower Home Care	12	1	£75
Samaritans	4	4	£100
Crown Vets	12	2	£360
<b>Community Office rent</b>			
FAGCC			£2,000
SHC			£1,000
3GCC			£1,000
<b>Annual support grant</b>			
FAGCC			£15,000
			<b>£20,210</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>			
Electricity			£9,000
Water rates			£1,300
Broadband and phone			£660
Insurance			£300
Sanitary Waste disposal			£261
Fire alarm servicing			£145
Pat testing			£100
EICR			£500
Cleaning			£2,000
Maintenance			£1,000
			<b>£15,266</b>

## SWOT

<b>STRENGTHS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Track record of delivering successful developments</li><li>• Track record of successful SLF funding applications</li><li>• Scottish Land Fund Stage 1 successful</li><li>• Experience managing the village hall and other assets</li><li>• Significant community benefit funds received annually</li></ul>	<b>WEAKNESSES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• FAGCC doesn't own the Memorial Hall yet.</li><li>•</li></ul>
<b>OPPORTUNITIES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Scottish Land Fund open for applications</li><li>• Significant Community benefit funds to call upon</li><li>• Eligible for FERN Beinneun Community Fund</li></ul>	<b>THREATS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Decision on CAT takes too long</li><li>• Building survey may uncover large defects</li></ul>